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Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 PRS-01 /033 W
----------075435 051853Z /44
R 051440Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6526

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 SAN SALVADOR 0034

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OVIP (TODMAN, TERENCE A.)
SUBJECT: Q'S AND A'S FOR USE WITH PRESS IN EL SALVADOR

REF: STATE 308366, SAN SALVADOR 6007

1. IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARA 2 OF STATE 308366, THIS MESSAGE PROVIDES SAMPLE A'S AND A'S FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN'S USE DURING PRESS ENCOUNTERS IN EL SALVADOR.

2. QUESTION: WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF EL SALVADOR'S NEW LAW FOR THE DEFENSE OF PUBLIC ORDER?

ANSWER: THE LAW WAS DRAFTED, AS I UNDERSTAND IT, TO RESPOND TO A FELT NEED FOR SOME GREATER DEFENSE OF SOCIETY IN THE FACE OF A RISING LEVEL OF VIOLENCE AND TERRORIST INCIDENTS. SOME PEOPLE CRITICIZE THE LAW AS OPENING THE WAY FOR REPRESSION. I THINK THE NET JUDGEMENT WILL DEPEND UPON HOW THE LAW IS APPLIED AND IMPLEMENTED--AND THIS REMAINS TO BE SEEN.

QUESTION: WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF EL SALVADOR'S NEW LAW FOR THE "IMPUESTO TERRORITORIAL"?

ANSWER: IN ITS CONCEPT AND ITS FORMULATION THE "IMPUESTO TERRITORIAL" SEEMS WELL-DESIGNED TO INCREASE
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LAND UTILIZATION AND TO BRING IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE BENFIT OF THE PEASANT WORKERS. NO LAW IS, OF COURSE, PERFECT AND AGAIN MUCH WILL DEPEND ON HOW IT IS IMPLEMENTED. I WAS GRATIFIED TO HEAR THAT, IN GENERAL, AFFECTED SECTORS OF SOCIETY HAVE NOT OPPOSED THE LAW AND HAVE RECEIVED IT AS A PROMISING AND BENEFICIAL STEP FORWARD.

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QUESTION: DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD OF THE ROMERO GOVERNMENT IS BETTER THAN THAT OF THE MOLINA ADMINISTRATION?

ANSER: I WOULD PREFER NOT TO DRAW COMPARISONS. BUT I DO BELIEVE THAT THERE HAS BEEN IMPROVEMENT OVER RECENT MONTHS AND I CERTAINLY HOPE THT THIS TREND CONTINUES.

QUESTION: HAS THE UNITED STATES IN RECENT MONTHS MODIFIED IT SPOSITION ON ADHERENCE TO HUMAN RIGHTS PRINCIPLES BOTH WORLDWIDE AND IN EL SALVADOR IN PARTICULAR?

ANSWER: DEFINITELY NOT. PRESIDENT CARTER'S SPEECH DURING HUMAN RIGHTS WEEK CLEARLY REAFFIRMED THE COMMITMENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO CINTINUE TO PRESS FOR THE OBSERVANCE OF BASIC HUNKN RIGHTS ON A WORLD-WIDE BASIS. I WOULD EMPHASIZE THAT US COMMITMENT TO THESE PRINCIPLES IS LONG STANDING, GOING BACK TO OUR OWN CONSTITUTION AND THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS DECLARATION AND HAS BEEN A MATTER OF US LAW APPROVED DURING PAST ADMINISTRATIONS.

QUESTION: DOES THE UNITED STATES USE A DOUBLE STANDARD IN PRESSING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN DIFFERENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COUNTRIES; FOR EXAMPLE EL SALVADOR AND KOREA?

ANSWER: NO. THE UNITED STATES ADVOCTAES THE SAME STANDARDS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS OBSERVANCE IN ALL COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD. IT IS OBVIOUS, OF COURSE, THAT OUR ABILITY TO HELP BRING ABOUT CHANGE AND IMPROVEMENT VARIES FROM COUNTRY TO COUNTRY.

QUESTION: WOULD YOU NOT CONSIDER US EFFORTS TO HELP BRING ABOUT SUCH CHANGE IN OTHER COUNTRIES AS INTERVENTION?

ANSWER: IT IS OUR INTENTION TO COOPERATE WITH OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF HUMAN LIFE AND TO SEEK TO FIND WAYS TO FURTHER THIS COOPERATION. PRACTICALLY ALL COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD INCLUDING SATCADOR ARE COMMITTED TO THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS GUARANTEEING OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS. THUS THE US CANNOT CONSIDER A COUNTRY'S HUMAN RIGHTS AS STRICTLY INTERNAL CONCERN.

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6527

QUESTION: WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF THE RECENT VISIT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO EL SALVADOR?

ANSWER: I FEEL THAT THE INVITATION TO THE IAHRC WAS A POSITIVE STEP BY PRESIDENT ROMERO TO ALLOW A FULL, OPEN, IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN EL SALVADOR WHICH WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDY. (SENTENCE CAN BE ADDED IF RESULTS ARE PUBLICIZED BY TIME OF VISIT.)

QUESTION: HOW DO YOU FEEL THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR A SETTLEMENT OF THE LONG-STANDING EL SALVADOR-HONDURAN BORDER DISPUTE ARE PROGRESSING?

ANSWER: I AM PERSONALLY VERY ENCOURAGED AND PLEASED WITH THE POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENTS OF BOTH COUNTRIES IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS IN THEIR ATTEMPTS TO ACHIEVE AN AMICABLE AND EQUITABLE SOLUTION TO THIS SERIOUS PROBLEM. AN EXCEPTIONALLY WELL-QUALIFIED MEDIATOR HAS BEEN AGREED TO BY BOTH COUNTRIES AND THE PROSPECTS FOR PROMPT AND EFFECTIVE NEGOTIATIONS APPEAR VERY PROMISING.

QUESTION;X WHY HAS THE US GOVERNMENT EXCLUDED SALVADORAN SUGAR EXPORTERS FROM THE US MARKET BY

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IMPOSING A PROHIBITIVELY HIGH TARIFF?

ANSWER: THE US DOMESTIC SUGAR PROGRAM ESTABLISHED BY THE DE LA GARZA AMENDMENT TO THE 1977 FARM BILL REQUIRES THE MAINTENANCE OF A US DOMESTIC PRICE LEVEL OF 13.5 CENTS PER POUND.

THE INCREASED TARIFFS AND FEES IMPLEMENTED NOVEMBER 2, 1977, TO ASSURE THE REQUIRED 13.5 CENTS US PRICE LEVEL ARE CONSIDERED AS INTERIM MEASURES AND SHOULD BE LIFTED ONCE THE INTERNATIONAL SUGAR AGREEMENT (ISA), PROVISIONALLY APPLIED JANUARY 1, HAS ITS EXPECTED IMPACT ON THE WORLD PRICE OF SUGAR.

QUESTION: WHAT IS THE US GOVERNMENT'S POLICY ON PROMOTING US INVESTMENT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES SUCH AS EL SALVADOR?

ANSWER: WE BELIEVE INCREASED CAPITAL INVESTMENT, BOTH FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC, IS IMPORTANT FOR DEVELOPMENT. I WOULD MENTION AS AN IMPORTANT US CONTRIBUTION THE OVERSEAS PRIVATE INVESTMENT CORPORATION (OPIC), A US GOVERNMENT CORPORATION ESTABLISHED IN 1969 TO ENCOURAGE AND FACILITATE US PRIVATE DIRECT INVESTMENT OVERSEAS, BUT ESPECIALLY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. AS A MATTER OF FACT, OPIC HAS RECENTLY OPTED TO CONCENTRATE ITS EFFORTS IN THOSE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WHOSE PER CAPITA INCOME IN 1975 WAS UNDER $500, WHICH WOULD INCLUDE EL SALVADOR.

QUESTION: IS PROTECTIONISM ON THE RISE IN THE US AND HAS THE US GOVERNMENT ADOPTED A MORE PROTECTIONIST INTERNATIONAL TRADE POLICY?
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ANSWER: PROTECTIONISM APPEARS TO BE ON THE RISE IN THE US, ESPECIALLY IN THE ORGANIZED LABOR SECTOR WHICH SEES A TREND OF LOW PRICED IMPORTS TAKING AN INCREASINGLY LARGER SHARE IN MANY AREAS OF THE US DOMESTIC MARKET.

NOTWITHSTANDING THE ABOVE PRESSURE, THE US GOVERNMENT IS CONTINUING TO SUPPORT ITS HISTORICAL PREFERENCE FOR GREATER, RATHER THAN LESS, TRADE LIBERALIZATION AND IS ACTIVELY PURSUING THIS END IN THE ON-GOING MULTINATIONAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS (MTN).

QUESTION: WHY IS THE US INVESTIGATING LA COMPANIA

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SLAVADORENA DE CAFE (COSCASE)?

ANSWER: ACCORDING TO A NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE THE COMMISSION ON COMMODITY FUTURES IS INVESTIGATING THE POSSIBILITY THAT BRAZILIAN AND SALVADORAN COFFEE INTERESTS HAVE CONSPIRED TOGETHER TO MAINTAIN AN ARTIFICIALLY HIGH PRICE FOR COFFEE IN THE US COMMODITY EXCHANGE MARKET. THIS COMMISSION IS A BODY WITH INVESTIGATIVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ASSURING THAT COMMODITY PRICES IN THE US ARE DETERMINED BY THE FREE INTERPLAY OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND, RATHER THAN MANIPULATION.
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